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ABSTRACT

This issue offers a synthesis of the lessons from work/education partnerships in 21 cities and discussions of a number of leading work/education partnership program models. "Effective Work/Education Partnerships" summarizes lessons of effective partnerships identified during an examination of 21 programs sponsored by the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation. The article highlights important steps that every partnership should take to achieve success and identifies issues that collaborations must address to ensure survival. "Work/Education Partnerships in Three Cities" provides lessons drawn from the experiences of three cities: Boston, Massachusetts; Portland, Oregon; and Richmond, Virginia. The article describes their three distinct strategies for bringing together schools, businesses, job training agencies, and other institutions to help young people make the transition from school to employment or further education. "Career Beginnings: A National School to College Partnership" describes Career Beginnings, a new national program that attempts to offer young men and women a route to either work or college, depending on the needs and capacities of each of the 5,000 students it serves. "From the Bookcase" (Andrew Hahn) reviews recent publications related to youth and youth programs. "CHR Notes" (Erik Butler) summarizes recent activities in which the Center for Human Resources has participated. (YLB)

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PRACTICAL LESSONS FROM RESEARCH AND PROGRAM EXPERIENCE

Youth Programs

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# Effective Work/Education Partnerships

For more than a decade, schools, businesses, and job training agencies have been establishing partnerships to help young people make the transition from school to work.

Among the most ambitious initiatives have been 21 work/education partnership projects fostered by the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation in cities across the country. Unlike most "school/business partnerships" in which an individual firm and a local school work together, the Clark projects were conceived as complex, community-wide efforts involving a number of local employers and institutions. Addressing such pressing issues among high school students as poor basic skills, rising dropout rates, and severe levels of youth unemployment, these work/education partnerships also sought fundamental changes in the relationship between the educational system and the business community.

The 21 Clark-sponsored projects are a particularly valuable source of information on the partnership experience. Dating back to the late 1970s, they represent some of the earliest attempts to build effective vehicles for public/private collaboration. With nearly a decade of operation in some cases (far longer than most existing partnerships), they present an excellent opportunity to learn not only about the initiation of multi-institutional alliances, but also about their developmental stages and long-term growth. Ranging from projects that have become national models to some that barely got off the ground, the partnerships demonstrate the outcomes of both good and bad decisions and help us understand key elements that contribute to failure and success.

Recently, the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation asked Brandeis University's Center for Human Resources to review with a critical eye the diverse experiences of the work/education partnerships that the foundation had helped support during the past decade. This article summarizes some of the lessons of effective partnerships identified by the Center during its examination of the 21 Clark projects and of other city-wide educational initiatives. Based on what worked well at these locally developed projects (and what did not), the article highlights important steps that every partnership should take to achieve success and identifies issues that collaborations must address to assure survival.

## What is the Work/Education Partnership Model?

To varying degrees, the 21 work/education partnerships studied by Brandeis incorporated two fundamental features:

- The public schools allowed private employers to assist with the redesign of secondary-level curricula to increase emphasis on the relationships between academic skills, pre-employment skills, and the ability to work.

- In return, the business community provided students with summer and after-school jobs that offered the potential for long-term training and career development.

The goals of the partnerships were to increase opportunity, enhance self-esteem, and improve school attendance among disadvantaged, marginally-achieving high school students who hoped to enter full-time employment after graduation.

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***Youth Programs*** **is Published by the Center for Human Resources, The Heller School, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts, in Association with the National Youth Practitioners' Network.**

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# *Youth Programs* is Changing

As many of you know, the Center for Human Resources has been publishing *Youth Programs* for nearly a decade. Designed to provide practitioners and policy makers with information on recent research, model programs and "best practices" in youth employment and education, the newsletter has circulated to approximately 7,000 individuals and organizations whenever we have had the funds (read "grants") to produce and mail another issue.

That's the rub. Under this system, *Youth Programs* has appeared on a pretty irregular schedule – sometimes with as much as a year between issues. People keep telling us how useful *Youth Programs* is, and they keep asking us to make it available on a more regular schedule.

So, in the future, *Youth Programs* will be published four times a year by the Center for Human Resources and the Youth Practitioners' Network. To make this possible, however, we have to put the newsletter on a subscription basis. Beginning with the winter issue, *Youth Programs* will cost $24 a year for individuals and $48 for institutions.

Our goal in publishing *Youth Programs* has been to provide youth services professionals with the practical information they need to build better programs and to help young men and women achieve economic self-sufficiency. In that regard, past newsletters have offered guidance on JTPA's performance standard system, the use of JTPA 8% funds for innovative programming, and the implementation of youth competency systems. This issue continues that pragmatic approach, offering a synthesis of the lessons from work/education partnerships in 21 cities and discussions of a number of leading work/education partnership program models. Future issues will address basic skills education programs for disadvantaged youth – perhaps the hottest issue in youth employment today – and enriched summer jobs programs.

We hope you will join us as a subscriber to *Youth Programs* by using the return postcard enclosed in this issue. We also welcome any suggestions you may have for future issues. Let us know what *you* would like to see by writing *Youth Programs*, Center for Human Resource, The Heller School, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts 02254, or calling the Center's toll-free number: (800) 343-4705.



*Partnerships, continued from page 1*

Within this broad framework, each community created its own variations:

- In Portland, Oregon, educators and business representatives designed a special curriculum and established links to a host of other community partnership activities. Students were assigned "Partnership English" and "Partnership Math" in high school, and worked in summer and after-school jobs.

- In Richmond, Virginia, a local university developed a pre-employment curriculum for a combined in-school and summer program.

- In Buffalo, New York, the partnership project focused on students in the high schools' vocational education program rather than on those in the general program.

- In some communities, projects were piloted in one school, while others implemented them system-wide. Several brought in another partner – their local JTPA agency – which generally provided operating funds and support for summer jobs.

While there was substantial variety, what was consistent from site to site was the focus on the transition from school to work among marginal students, and the negotiation of a new working relationship between area businesses and schools.

## An Overview of the Lessons

The clearest lesson emerging from the twenty-one projects is that work/education partnerships are complex, fragile initiatives. They must bring together an array of specialized organizations, overcome mutual mistrust, identify shared goals, secure and maintain political and economic agreements, gain the support of both top level leadership and line staff, and change the operating styles of large bureaucracies.

To persist, partnerships must survive changes in personnel, occasional failures, and shifts in the economic environment while adhering to their long-range goals and original vision.

Fulfilling all of these criteria is not easy. Among the twenty-one partnerships initially supported by the Clark Foundation, for example, problems in each of these areas took their toll: at least two projects never really got off the ground, half a dozen more faded out after a year of operation, and several others operated in reduced form with limited involvement from one or more key players.

What distinguished the most successful work/education projects were the *processes* through which partnerships were established and operated. The attention paid to the processes of *instilling ownership* among the partners, of short- and long-term *planning*, and of *managing change* often dictated success or failure.

Projects that focused heavily on these issues from their inception were the strongest, best able to leverage resources, and most capable of adapting to new circumstances. Those that failed to build a sense of shared commitment or neglected to establish a well-developed plan generally found themselves struggling to maintain their original levels of support and unable to adapt to changing organizational needs or interests.

## Instilling Ownership

As collaborative ventures, partnerships ask organizations and individuals to take significant risks – to move out of their familiar roles, to give up elements of control, to provide resources, and to invest substantial amounts of time and effort. Rarely will social responsibility alone be an adequate motivator to assure such investments. Rather, each partner must feel that the partnership is his or hers to some extent and that tangible benefits will accrue from participation.

**Successful Partnerships were Based on Shared Benefits.** The most effective work/education collaborations met important needs of their corporate and school partners. School efforts to improve students' basic skills and relate school studies to the workplace helped strengthen the business partners' work-force, reduce training costs, increase productivity, improve product quality, and reduce costs associated with hiring ill-prepared workers. In many cases corporate image in the community was also enhanced by participation in the partnership. In the same vein, schools benefitted from jobs for students...a powerful motivator in a tight economy. After-school jobs and school subjects related to the workplace enabled some students to recognize the importance of education for the first time. Many teachers reported improvements in students' classroom behavior and attributed it to the social support for achievement and good behavior provided by skilled co-workers. Principals remarked that support of local business leaders facilitated change in previously resistent school systems.

The ways in which a work/education partnership could meet corporate and school needs were different in each community. But in every successful initiative, those needs and benefits were identified as the basis for commitment to collaboration.

**Securing Ownership at the Top.** Partnerships usually began with a single person or organization – the "broker" – taking the lead by identifying a problem and advocating for a response.

*In Birmingham, Alabama, the local Alliance of Business was the major advocate of the partnership idea and pushed it strongly. Two or three CEOs, members of the Alliance, provided joint leadership, and originally played the brokering role together. The Alliance's strong commitment was essential in convincing local firms to join the partnership and provide jobs for young people who completed the partnership's pre-employment curriculum.*

The most effective brokers had strong reputations in business, education, and/or government. They were also very aware of the "ownership" issue. They recognized the need to transcend their own self-interests and to instill a sense of ownership among other players. They knew that, to commit to such an ambitious project, a player would need to take part in its earliest phases of development – to feel that from the very start it was his or hers.

Therefore, it is not surprising that, in the most successful projects, the broker quickly involved a small group of high-level leaders – typically the mayor, the school superintendent, and several influential CEOs – in the planning process. These leaders jointly created a mission statement for the partnership. They also set the stage for further planning and implementation by creating an ongoing governance structure, establishing short- and long-term goals, defining what would be considered "success," and hiring staff to refine the program model.

To identify top-level individuals for involvement in a partnership, the model projects asked three basic questions:

- Whose help will be needed? What organizations provide services or have resources that the project will need? What organizations serve or represent the populations affected by the project?

- Who is likely to feel threatened by the project? Can their fear be turned into support through involvement? If not, how can this fear be minimized?

• Who has the authority at each organization to commit resources? Who can influence others in the community to join the partnership?

Recognizing that serious involvement occurs when one has something at stake if the project fails, the leaders in successful partnerships placed high expectations on all players. They sought serious, demonstrated "buy in". To join the core leaders group, players were *expected* to involve staff people from their institutions, to commit resources, and to insure that their institutions were involved in other ways. If a key partner was unwilling to do so, it was a "red flag" indicating that the partnership was on shaky ground.

*In one midwestern city, the business community was very interested in starting a work/education partnership project based upon the Clark Foundation's model. Corporations were willing to take risks; however, the schools were not (although the schools were interested in the benefits). The lack of "buy-in" on the schools' part was a key factor in the partnership's failure.*

Even with high level endorsement, little happened among the work/education partnerships until a capable individual was hired to take charge of project development. Most projects hired a full-time executive director who assumed responsibility for nuts-and-bolts planning and implementation. The strongest projects positioned the director to be perceived by each of the partners as having power and influence with other powerful players.

**Securing Ownership Among Line Staff.** A partnership program cannot operate solely with upper echelon players. Chief executive officers have neither the time nor the inclination to be involved in the nuts-and-bolts aspects of project planning.

In all partnerships, top level players eventually recruit line staff to handle planning and implementation details. The experiences of the 21 work/education partnerships indicate that everyone who could possibly influence the project should be involved in some way. School personnel such as principals, guidance directors, guidance counselors, curriculum developers, and teachers were among those typically brought in. Business leaders identified vice presidents, managers, personnel directors, and line supervisors. PIC or SDA directors involved youth coordinators, intake personnel, program monitors, and other JTPA personnel who could influence the partnership program.

However, it was not only *who* was involved that was important. The experiences of partnerships around the country show unequivocally that *when* and *how* these actors were approached and cultivated heavily influenced the chances for a partnership project to succeed. In retrospect, a key lesson is, "the *earlier*, the better." And as was the case for the executives before them, "buy in" of line staff was greatly enhanced when they were sold on the partnership idea and *asked* to take part rather than assigned to functions over which they had no say. In fact, allowing line staff to participate in defining their roles also contributed to a sense of project ownership. Staff were most effective if involved with the issues they felt most important and with tasks directly related to their skills.

*In one of the southern partnerships, the school superintendent was involved in the planning process, but principals and teachers were not. The power structure of the schools was one in which the principals were relatively autonomous; hence, when "handed" the completed partnership model to implement, the schools ignored the central administration.*

## Planning a Work/Education Partnership

Work/education partnerships require planning as well as ownership. As complex ventures involving numerous organizations, these projects call for a careful delineation of mission, goals, roles and responsibilities before implementation begins.

The investment in up-front planning was one of the differences between the more and less successful work/education initiatives. Effective partnerships took the time to develop a well-conceived, formal plan at the beginning of the project. In contrast, most major problems encountered by the less successful partnership projects were symptoms of poor planning. Too often, sites neglected to set aside adequate time for the joint development of a detailed plan or the creation of a strategy that would guide the project over the long-term.

**Building Trust** Before starting a formal planning process, some of the Clark partnerships found it necessary to overcome prejudices among school, business, and government personnel who had traditionally been isolated from one another.

*In one city, teachers who were appointed to the partnership project resented years of failure with school/business agreements. At the same time, principals viewed the Chamber of Commerce as a group that wanted the central school administration to undercut principals' power. Nobody*

*dealt with these issues as the partnership was being planned or implemented. When the teachers resisted the project, the principals were provided with a convenient reason to sabotage the central administration's partnership plans. This partnership died quickly.*

*In several other cities, educators felt that the profit motive might influence businesses to push the teaching of short-term skills instead of supporting long-term educational growth. Consequently, many schools were initially unwilling to commit resources to programs they viewed as secondary to the primary mission of education. Similarly, some business leaders believed that the public schools did not know how to prepare students for work, while others were reluctant to become involved with an institution they viewed as a failure. Executives sometimes feared a confrontation with a school board or hesitated to go public before a project had proved itself.*

Every successful work/education partnership began its planning process by addressing these issues and working to build trust among the key partners. Some mistrust was overcome by explaining that the partnership could be a vehicle through which institutions could change what they disliked, and by demonstrating that the partners would have the opportunity to avoid problems through participation in the planning process. Several of the sites conducted workshops in which players confronted the issues face-to-face.

Other partnerships used site visits and exchanges as a way of building under-standing. For example, to counter the views of some business people that students were ill-mannered and that the schools were in chaos, several Clark sites brought business representatives on visits to the schools. They showed their visitors first-hand what students were really like, what teachers' jobs entailed, and what both groups had to deal with on a day-to-day basis. The business people's attitudes were changed dramatically by these visits.

**The Partnership Plan**. The complexities of collaboration among diverse groups required that all partners jointly agree on goals, objectives, and implementation strategies. The most effective plans translated goals and objectives into concrete tasks with specifications defining who was responsible for what, when each task should be completed, and what level of quality had to be achieved for a task to be considered satisfactorily completed. The plans included clear chains of authority. Firm *commitments* were obtained *in writing* from each person or organization, and these commitments were made public.

*In Portland, Oregon, fourteen of the city's top leaders signed the "Leaders' Roundtable Master Agreement" in which they agreed to actively participate in implementing the partnerships plan. The Agreement defined the goals of reducing school dropouts, increasing employment skills, and providing increased access to jobs for youth (especially for low income and minority youth). The leaders agreed to advocate for and support the inclusion of effective education, job training, and support services in the city's youth employment programs. Furthermore, the signers consented to undertake joint planning, share resources, set jurisdictional and turf concerns aside, and commit staff as necessary. This formal document was heavily publicized for all to see, and was accompanied by other documents that set out in detail how the project would evolve over time.*

**A Long-Range Strategy**. Since the hardest part of a work/education partnership is getting started, most projects focus their energies specifically on that issue. However, the experience of the 21 sites indicated that it was equally important to develop a long-range strategy as an integral part of the planning process. When early strategizing was not guided by a long-range viewpoint, partnerships ran into a variety of problems. After an initial year, some sites found themselves disagreeing about whether and how the partnership should expand. Several programs started out small and never grew. Others continually changed priorities with no coherent direction and eventually lost the interest of several key partners. As new issues emerged, the projects were confronted with the need for an awkward re-evaluation of their earlier goals and definitions of success. Too often, partnerships entered new periods of struggle that could have been avoided had early planning been more thorough.

The development of a long-range strategy was particularly important in institutionalizing the partnership program in a community. Early on, the most effective projects not only identified long-term goals, but developed strategies for securing additional partners, for developing new components addressing related issues, and for securing additional, stable funding. These long-range plans provided the drive and vision necessary for the partnerships to maintain the commitment of key actors and to move forward after the initial program was in place.

## Managing Change in a Mature Partnership

For partnerships to survive more than a few years, they must be able to adapt to a changing environment. It is an unfortunate fact that most partnerships come and go. They are ill-prepared to evaluate and adjust their program's operations or to face the adverse effects of turnover among key players, shifts in the economy, or changing needs of their partners.

During the initial stages of the effective partnership projects, management stemmed directly from a well-conceived plan. However, analysis of the developmental stages of the projects shows that, after the "honeymoon" was over, there was need for a balance between the initial call for clarity and a new demand for flexibility. In other words, to sustain institutional relationships and the necessary feelings of ownership, partners had to modify their plans as their programs evolved.

**Evaluation**. One of the most critical tools for managing change in a partnership was the development, during the up-front planning, of an evaluation mechanism that could measure progress toward goals, pinpoint problems, and demonstrate success. In this area, two factors separated the effective partnerships from the failures: what information their evaluation mechanism gathered and what was done with it.

Effective projects related their evaluation systems directly to their short- and long-range goals. They regularly gathered and reviewed data, providing timely information for decision makers. Using evaluative information as a management tool, project leaders and planners met often to determine how their partnerships were doing and where their problems were. The combination of follow-up, evaluation, and revision enabled them to correct mistakes and misunderstandings before they had gone too far. Data was immediately communicated to the appropriate players so that they could correct problems, publicize successes, revise the partnership plan, or make other timely decisions. Ongoing collaborative planning sessions enabled all parties to know what the others were doing and would be doing. They also maintained the program's vision and the partners' feelings of ownership even though a staff had been operating the programs over many months.

**Communication**. In any alliance, it is also important for evaluative or other information to reach the right people. Many programs discovered this the hard way when program outcome data or participant feedback was not passed along to all the people who should have received it. They learned that their plans should have delineated *formal* lines of communication. Since each component of their collaboration inevitably affected the others, successful programs soon realized that all players should be kept aware of what was going on in all aspects of the program. The key rule governing the process was that at no time should any player have the opportunity to say, "Why wasn't I consulted?" or "Why wasn't I informed?"

**Problem-Solving.** Evaluation programs and communications systems make it possible for managers to avoid many of the headaches with which they would otherwise have had to contend. Nevertheless, the presence of these systems should not imply that partnerships can run themselves. There are problems that upset the best designed plans.

- In several cities, the environment for a partnership changed after an economic downturn. Business partners found themselves unable to deliver jobs for partnership students.

- In two sites, new statewide educational regulations necessitated significant changes in the content of partnerships' pre-employment and basic skills curricula.

- In all of the Clark sites, some partners failed to fulfill commitments. Similarly, much of the initial excitement and strong public relations thrusts evident in the beginning of the projects faded away with time. And, in all cities, key individuals left their jobs and were replaced by less enthusiastic players.

These kinds of problems were often the most difficult for partnerships to resolve and represented the gravest threats to the survival of the projects. Sites dealt with them in several ways. A few cities tried to minimize disruptions caused by turnover of players with notification and replacement strategies. Others had each key player groom an alternate who attended meetings to observe how the partnership worked, kept abreast of all partnership activities, and was involved in one or more subcommittees. A number of sites relied on peer pressure from business leaders to enforce commitments or to replace partners who had dropped out.

The most meticulously planned partnerships developed formal problem-solving procedures. By having a procedure in place, those partnerships

insured that appropriate individuals were aware of both major and minor problems and that the problems were addressed in a timely manner.

*Portland, Oregon developed a very effective procedure that laid out the steps by which the source of a problem could be identified and notified, corrective steps implemented, and similar problems avoided in the future. This type of process insured that a problem would not become the source of quiet complaining behind the backs of the players whose institutions were responsible.*

In all successful partnerships, however, the keys to managing change were a strong, active governing board; the presence of trust and positive relationships among partners; and ownership as the basis for flexible management.

### Conclusion

Work/education partnerships can produce admirable results; however, they can be difficult to organize, and sometimes even more difficult to sustain. It is helpful for partnership operators to be aware of the experiences of other partnerships. Many lessons have become evident over the last decade – lessons that provide insights into the developmental stages through which any partnership must inevitably pass, the problems which must be endured, and the strategies that can facilitate resolution of those problems.

With conscientious planning that acknowledges the need for all players to feel genuine partnership, these alliances can blossom into very effective vehicles for educational reform. And by anticipating changes in agenda and environment, turnover of key actors, and other events that occur as a project matures, managers can assure the long-term operation and institutionalization of the programs resulting from collaboration.

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*This article is a brief synthesis of material in a forthcoming (November, 1987) Center for Human Resources monograph on effective work/education partnerships. For more information on the monograph, write the Center for Human Resources, The Heller School, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts 02254, or call toll-free: (800) 343-4705.*

## *Preconditions for Partnership*

Before a work/education partnership can be established, a community must be economically and philosophically ready to take on the project. Several of the communities that began McConnell Clark-sponsored projects were not ready and had little success in setting up a viable partnership. Prior to investing in a formal planning process, community leaders need to determine if it is appropriate to begin a partnership in their city. Some key factors to consider are:

- There must be a defined business leadership or single lead company committed to involvement in community affairs and capable of initiating such a project.

- The schools must acknowledge, at least privately, that they are having difficulty preparing students for the work world, and must be receptive to the idea that businesses might be able to assist them in this regard.

- Some private seed money must be available. Regulations governing public funds are often too restrictive to allow many of the activities that stimulate a successful partnership with the private sector.

- If federal JTPA funds are to support the bulk of the project, the SDA/PIC staff must be flexible enough to allow the partnership to operate differently than their other "job training" programs do.

- If jobs for students are to be a by-product of the partnership, the local labor market needs to be healthy enough to enable those jobs to be generated.

- There cannot be a major, ongoing political battle among school, business, and/or government partners.

# Work/Education Partnerships in Three Cities

Many of the lessons on work/education partnerships, and on partnerships generally, are drawn from the experiences of three cities: Boston, Massachusetts; Portland, Oregon; and Richmond, Virginia. Among them, they offer three distinct strategies for bringing together schools, businesses, job training agencies and other institutions to help young people make the transition from school to employment or further education.

### Richmond: New Horizons

The New Horizons program in Richmond, Virginia, is the oldest and one of the more successful of the work/education partnerships fostered by the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation. Established in 1980, the program links Richmond's public schools, its Private Industry Council, two area colleges and many local businesses in a two-year program to prepare disadvantaged high school students for private sector jobs or continued education.

The New Horizons program grew out of the concern among Richmond school and business leaders in the late 1970s over the educational attainment of high school graduates and their readiness for employment. Teenage unemployment was at 20% in some parts of the city, and more and more businesses were expressing dissatisfaction with the work attitudes and the basic skills of young entry-level employees. Impressed by a school/business partnership developed in Oakland, California, and supported by a planning grant from the Clark Foundation, the Richmond Private Industry Council formed a working group of representatives from key local organizations – PIC members, personnel executives from Richmond firms, school administrators and representatives from area colleges – to design a school-to-work transition program that would help high school students build the skills they needed for employment or further education.

The result of several months of planning was the New Horizons program, which, since 1980, has provided two years of education and private sector work experience for 11th and 12th graders in Richmond's high schools. The program serves 50-70 young people every year who have good attendance records, maintain acceptable grades (at least a "C" average), and are JTPA eligible. During the summers following their sophmore and junior years, students attend classes four mornings a week and work in the afternoon. During the school year, students take three regular classes and attend a special New Horizons class in the morning. They then work at their jobs for four hours in the afternoon. The summer curriculum focuses on basic skills education, including listening and speaking skills, reading and writing, math, problem solving and computer skills. The school year class covers employability and job readiness skills, including discussions of evaluations students received on their jobs.

**A Multi-Institution Partnership.** While relatively small in scale, New Horizons brought together a number of key Richmond institutions. The curriculum for the program was developed by faculty at Virginia Commonwealth University with substantial business input. The school system took part in the early planning and now provides two New Horizons teachers at each of the high schools. The teachers not only run the classes, but provide counseling to students. They are also involved in regularly revising the curriculum to make it more responsive to student and business needs. The jobs for New Horizons students are provided by Richmond area businesses, which generally hire three to six students per year, pay students' salaries (initially minimum wage), and provide release time for supervisors to train, monitor and evaluate students. No student is enrolled in the program without the guarantee of an available job. The J. Sargent Reynolds Junior College hosts classes during the summer, and the Private Industry Council provides project staff, secures corporate job commitments, and organizes training for company personnel who are supervising students. While the Private Industry Council administers the program, all of the various partners played a role in designing the partnership, and all have a stake in the program's outcomes.

The ability to cross institutional boundaries in creating a coherent, well-managed education and employment program for youth is what has made New Horizons a well-regarded model for work/education partnerships. When the program began, the participation of numerous area companies in program design and the provision of jobs, and the involvement of both companies and universities in the development of in-school curriculum, marked a vital shift in the relationships between major institutional actors in

Richmond. The result of that shift has been a new set of attitudes toward young people and the schools within the business community, and new tools and resources for the schools to use in working with disadvantaged youth.

## Boston and Portland: Frameworks for Partnership

The Boston Compact and the Portland Investment provide a sharply different vision of work/education partnership from that of New Horizons. While all three initiatives build on carefully designed school-to-work transition programs with substantial business involvement, the Boston Compact and the Portland Investment are more aptly described as citywide plans than as "programs." In both Boston and Portland, schools, business organizations, the Private Industry Council and other local institutions have established an overarching partnership agreement under which an array of specific programs can be organized. The goal in both cities is to create an ambitious, city-wide strategy that focuses significant resources on a broad range of services for large numbers of at-risk youth.

## The Boston Compact

In its simplest form, the Boston Compact is a bargain between the school system, the business community and other major Boston institutions to bring about demonstrable improvements in the quality of public education in the city. At the core of the 1982 Compact was the agreement that in return for measurable gains by the high schools in student retention, basic skills competency and college or job placements, the business community would provide priority hiring to graduates of the Boston Public Schools. Since then, the Compact has expanded to include similar agreements with 24 area colleges to expand enrollment of Boston high school graduates and with a group of trade unions to increase access for Boston graduates to apprenticeship programs.

The strategy of building a broad, essentially political, agreement as a framework for work/education partnerships in Boston grew out of the community's recent history. The early 1980s saw the Boston Public Schools in a state of disarray stemming from the 1970s battles over desegregation: enrollments were down, the dropout rate had reached 40-50%, and the flight to private schools and the suburbs had left the public schools with virtually no constituency. Meanwhile, education was fast becoming an issue for the Boston business community. The passing of the baby boom meant that every year there were fewer young people entering the labor market, and more of those young people appeared to lack the basic skills needed to gain and keep a job. Without a turnaround in the schools, Boston business leaders were unsure how they would fill their jobs in the next decade.

**Focusing Resources on Education and Jobs.** For Boston, the strongest need was to create a sense of stability and confidence for the public schools and to establish a mechanism that would focus the community's resources on issues of education and jobs. By signalling the business community's support of the schools, and by creating measurable school improvement and employment goals, the Boston Compact accomplished that goal.

The result of the Boston Compact has been the creation and expansion of a host of employment and education initiatives for young people in the city. The key program is the Job Collaborative, a school-to-work transition program that provides career counseling, summer jobs and placement assistance to 11th and 12th grade students in Boston high schools. Begun (with support from the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation) as a joint venture of the Private Industry Council, the city's job training agency and the Boston Public schools in three high schools in 1981, the Job Collaborative provided an initial experience with collaboration that helped lead to the signing of the Compact. Under the Compact, the Job Collaborative has expanded to 15 of the city's high schools and is the primary vehicle for placing approximately 1,000 graduating seniors in full-time employment every year. The Private Industry Council's summer jobs program, which arranges unsubsidized private sector jobs for high school students, has also expanded through the Compact, from 150 jobs in 1981 to over 3,000 placements in 1987. In 1984, Compact Ventures, a dropout prevention program for 9th and 10th graders, was established in two high schools. In that program, the high schools reorganized the ways in which student classes were clustered, and the Private Industry Council funded additional in-school staff to provide counseling and world of work education for at-risk students. Other programs growing out of the Compact have included a mentoring program in conjunction with the national Career Beginnings project (discussed in this issue); a career and college counseling program created as part of the partnership between areas colleges and the public schools; a program providing "last dollar"

scholarship aid to Boston graduates hoping to attend college; and projects aimed at improving academic programs in the city's middle schools.

**A "Mega" Partnership.** In five years, the Boston Compact has fundamentally changed the relationship between the business community, the city and the school system. While working through specific programs that are themselves model work/education partnerships, the Compact has also established a broader "mega" partnership that provides a clear vision and a mechanism for long-term change in the schools.

## The Portland Investment

Like the Boston Compact, the Portland Investment is a broad, "mega" partnership whose goals are to expand long-term job opportunities for disadvantaged youth, improve employment preparation, and strengthen coordination and accountability among programs. While Portland faced less of a perceived crisis than Boston, the Investment, like the Compact and New Horizons, arose from real concerns about youth employment and the schools.

**Building on an Interest in Collaboration.** The Portland Investment began as a number of organizations were initiating collaborative efforts around the issues of youth employment and education. During 1982 and 1983, the Portland Chamber of Commerce established the Business Youth Exchange to coordinate requests from youth agencies to the business community; the City Council issued a youth policy paper, and a group of city youth agencies began meetings aimed at coordinating what was seen as a fragmented youth services system. The new school superintendent also set up a "Partnership Council" as part of his reform of the city's vocational education program, and with the transition from CETA to JTPA, a new Private Industry Council was being formed that included key actors from the chamber, school, and city programs.

In mid-1983, these projects began to gel, in part as the result of Portland's invitation to join the Urban Network Project. (The Urban Network Project was a national demonstration project, funded by Aetna and managed by the Center for Human Resources at Brandeis, that was designed to foster citywide public-private partnerships.) By the end of 1983, a multi-agency planning team including staff from the Chamber, the public schools, the city, and the Urban League began meeting weekly to develop a collaborative youth strategy. In 1984, the collaborative was formalized through the creation of the Leaders' Roundtable, which brought together the leaders of Portland's key business, education and youth agencies as an *ad hoc* governing body, and the signing of a Roundtable "Master Agreement" which established fundamental goals for Portland's youth partnership.

**Moving Towards a Youth System.** The partnership operated by Portland's interagency planning team and Leaders' Roundtable has resulted in a series of work/education partnerships that are seen as the building blocks of a coherent youth services system. Among those programs is the Partnership Project, a two-year school-to-work program for disadvantaged juniors and seniors at two of the city's high schools. Fostered by the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, the project provides marginally achieving students with a combination of pre-employment preparation, basic skills remediation, work-related in-school studies and employment, including summer and part-time school year jobs. Portland has also revamped its summer jobs program, pooling funds from several sources, creating a uniform intake and assessment process, and providing remediation through the school system. Under the Portland Investment umbrella, the city is taking part in the Summer Training and Employment Program (STEP) demonstration project managed by Public/Private Ventures and has also established an alternative, "school within a school" program (the Financial Services Academy); an experience-based career education project; and a counseling program aimed at helping at-risk middle school students make the transition to high school.

## Partnership Systems

Like the Boston Compact, the Portland Investment has gone beyond the idea of a partnership built on an individual program. Instead, in both cities, the "mega" partnership among schools, business, the job training system and others has established a framework which organizes an array of community resources and sets a coherent direction for the development of additional initiatives. Through both the Boston Compact and the Portland Investment, new partners have become active in addressing employment and education concerns, and new programs have been developed that fill specific gaps in a system of services for at risk youth.

*continued on page 13*

# Career Beginnings: A National School to College Partnership

College attendance and graduation have come to be seen as the most certain route to adult economic success for young people. Yet most of our programs for youth from poor families have stressed high school graduation and immediate transition for work. A new national program, Career Beginnings, attempts to offer young men and women a route to either work or college, depending on the needs and capacities of each of the 5,000 students it serves.

### A 25 Site Network

The Career Beginnings Program began in 1986 as a 25 site network of work/education partnerships designed to help "tenacious" disadvantaged young people – high school students doing average work and unlikely to receive special attention at school – to go into full-time jobs or to pursue college as a realistic alternative to employment. Bringing together high schools, businesses, and local colleges in an unusual multi-faceted partnership, each Career Beginnings program provides low-income high school students with college and career preparation workshops, summer and school-year work experience, counseling and support services, and the individual guidance and encouragement of adult mentors.

### Bringing Colleges, Businesses and Schools Together

In its emphasis on higher education as a goal, its involvement of colleges and universities as active partners, and its stress on one-to-one mentoring, Career Beginnings is a significant departure from the traditional work/education partnership. Nationally, it is a partnership of major foundations, corporations, higher education institutions and government, and is actually operated by a university (the national Program Office is Brandeis' Center for Human Resources). At the community level, Career Beginnings creates a new set of collaborative relationships as well – it brings colleges into direct contact with the high schools and the business community around the issues of education and employment, often for the first time. Perhaps most importantly, Career Beginnings extends the meaning of partnership beyond the institutions to the individual through its one adult/one young person approach to mentoring.

So far, Career Beginnings appears to be working. Colleges have proven to be viable centers for program design and management, introducing to many communities a potential new partner for disadvantaged youth. Youth appear to want to go to college, challenging the usual assumptions about young people from poor families aspiring only to go immediately to work (nearly three quarters of the Career Beginnings first year graduates have applied to and been accepted in college). Every young person had a mentor, meaning that over two years, literally thousands of professional and business people got to know a young person as a human being, not just as a statistic or a remote employee.

Finally, in keeping with the theme of this newsletter, the Career Beginnings sites are proving to be effective partnerships. High schools and colleges are working together well in most cities, and in several communities are using Career Beginnings as a base for much-expanded college preparation and recruitment activities. Business involvement in the partnerships has also expanded beyond providing summer jobs. Some business partnerships for Career Beginnings have evolved into genuine corporate sponsorships, with leading corporations contributing substantial cash support or providing large numbers of mentors as their contribution. Local Private Industry Councils, who often have the most experience working with youth programming, have become active partners, not only providing funding for summer jobs or year-round counselors, but also arranging mentorships for their corporate members and helping train college and business personnel to work with disadvantaged youth.

### Planned Expansion

With support from the Commonwealth Fund, the McArthur Foundation, and the Gannett Foundation, Career Beginnings is now ready to expand to new cities. Most of the initial group of 25 colleges will continue past the current second year of operations, and new programs will be added in 1988 and 1989. Those interested in knowing more about the Career Beginnings or in starting a program in their own community, should contact William M. Bloomfield, Program Manager, The Career Beginnings Program, The Heller School, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts 02254, (800) 343-4705.

# From The Bookcase

*by Andrew Hahn*

You should see the Center for Human Resources here at Brandeis University's Heller Graduate School. Books, reports, trade press, and printouts dot the window shelves, bookcases, and floors of Center researchers' offices. All this stuff concerns unemployed and underemployed youth, dropouts, teen parents, "at-risk" children, and the zillions of programs aimed at helping these groups.

In this column I want to give you a sense of what is worth looking at from the mound of recent publications that have come through the Center's door. Since it is nearly impossible to be objective and systematic, I will indulge in my favorite pastime – strolling around the Center and noting materials that I think you will find interesting. I won't say much about their contents but I will tell you why I picked them from the pack.

## Summer Enrichment

I've had the ***Summer Training and Education Program (STEP)*** reports from Public/Private Ventures on my desk for several months now. I was particularly interested because I am evaluating a similar enriched summer program for the New York City PIC called SWEP. The P/PV research is first class and backs what is now the conventional wisdom – the combination of studying and working during the summer months reduces the normal deterioration in learning that occurs over the summer.

One terrific side effect of the summer remediation movement: American public schools are beginning to use all twelve months of the year to combat illiteracy. But there is also one disturbing note in the P/PV research on summer learning. Kids score differently depending on the national normed test used. The Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT) results are not as dramatic as the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) results. HELP! Grantmakers and government, please give us a reliable test of basic skills: a test sensitive to cultural nuances, a test that has been normed recently, and a test which can be used before and after program participation.

## Workforce 2000, Literacy, and Youth

Take a look at the ***Workforce 2000*** report from the Hudson Institute. Your business partners will enjoy the demographics and futurology. A good report for consensus building.

The new CED report, ***Children in Need*** makes a passionate case for early intervention beginning with pre-natal care and pre-school education. I know of several foundations that are gearing up for major changes in their grantmaking, moving away from secondary and post-secondary programs and toward early intervention. The shift appeals to business leaders ("nip the problem in the bud"), but it worries some of us. If grantmaking shifts to the early years, and JTPA becomes a partner in mainstream school reform, who will look out for the youth most at-risk...kids on the streets?

So much has been written about illiteracy and the basic skills crisis. I like Andy Sum's research on the scope and impact of basic skills deficits among youth. Much of his work is unpublished but is available from Northeastern University. Andy was the chief contributor to the Children's Defense Fund's ***Declining Earnings of Young Men: Their Relation to Poverty, Teen Pregnancy, and Family Formation.***

We read foundation reports to learn what is being funded, and to discover who got a grant that we think we deserved. But these reports can also inform us on substance as well as dollars. The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation's special report, ***Living on the Jagged Edge***, is devoted to the theme of youth in crisis. It is a beautifully written overview of the state-of-the art. It will educate any newcomer to the field.

## Miscellaneous Reading

Over the summer I packed the car with family, portable personal computer, and a backlog of reading. Like many of you, I hid from my in-laws and read. Here is what was on my summer reading list:

***Launching Jobstart: A Demonstration for Dropouts in the JTPA System.*** MDRC reports on a demonstration project's efforts to get comprehensive dropout programs off the ground. JTPA performance standards often stood in the way.

***School Dropouts: Survey of Local Programs.*** GAO's review of local school dropout programs ... a good worm's eye view of what schools are doing.

***What To Do About Youth Dropouts?*** by SEEDCO, a New York-based consulting firm. Very nice source of program profiles.

***What Works: Schools That Work - Educating Disadvantaged Children***, U.S. Department of Education. An example of the "what works" approach to policy analysis, this piece may have gone too far down the reductionist road for useful insights.

***"Basic Academic Skills: Key to Youth's Future"*** and ***"A Business Approach to Social Programming."*** The first was written by Robert Taggart along with Gordon Berlin and Andrew Sum, the second by Taggart alone. The paper on basic skills shows the dimensions and consequences of the basic skills crisis in this country. The second paper lays out Taggart's compelling vision for using a business-like franchise model to run programs that address social welfare challenges.

***A Strategic Planning Guide for the New Futures Initiative"*** by the staff of the Annie Casey Foundation. This guide was sent to the cities that are competing in the Casey Foundation's New Futures initiative. I recommend that cities not competing for grants also obtain a copy of the guidelines. The conceptualization of the demonstration is terrific, and there is a fine section on case management that alone makes it worthwhile reading.

***"Youth Unemployment and the Transition from School to Work: Programs in Boston, Frankfort, and London."*** This article by Bill Spring in the ***New England Economic Review*** shows the value of cross cultural exchanges. It is useful to think about the Boston Compact in European apprenticeship terms.

***A Second Chance: Training For Jobs***. Sar Levitan and Frank Gallo from the Center for Social Policy Studies at George Washington University take a critical look at JTPA and recommend ways of making it more effective.

***The Fourth R: Workforce Readiness*** by the National Alliance of Business. A guide to business-education partnerships aimed at the business community, with information on benefits, models, and lessons.

Finally, get on the mailing list of the National Committee for Citizens in Education and National Center for Parents in Dropout Prevention. They publish ***Dropout Prevention: A Book of Sources***, a terrific clearinghouse of printed materials on this fast moving topic. *continued on page 15*

*Three Cities, continued from page 10*

Most important, however, Boston's and Portland's "mega" partnerships have provided a critical measure of stability to the youth serving systems in both communities. While driven by their programmatic components (the Job Collaborative or the Partnership Project, for example, are the vehicles through which young people build their skills or get jobs), the Boston Compact and the Portland Investment themselves transcend the success or failure of any one program. The result is the institutionalization of a *system* of partnerships that helps to insure continued public/private collaboration over the long term.

**For More Information**

For more information on Richmond's New Horizons program, contact Mr. Jona McKee, New Horizons Coordinator, Private Industry Council, 114 East Franklin Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219, (804) 643-0864.

For information on the Boston Compact, contact Edward Dooley, Executive Director, Boston Compact, Boston Public Schools, 26 Court Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02108, (617) 726-6200.

For information on the Portland Investment, contact Tom Nelson, Executive Director, Business Youth Exchange, 221 N.W. 2nd Avenue, Suite 300, Portland, Oregon 97209, (503) 228-8617.

# CHR Notes

*by Erik Butler*

Its been some time since the Center has reported to the field on its projects and activities. But we have been keeping busy ....

As most of you know, the Center for Human Resources is a research, training, and technical assistance organization working in the fields of education and youth employment, welfare reform, human services management, and employee benefits. Our mission has been to combine the knowledge gained from research with lessons from effective programs to provide practioners with pragmatic "best practices" assistance and advice.

### Career Beginnings

The Center's current projects reflect an exciting mix of research and practice. In 1986, we launched *Career Beginnings*, a 25-college network of programs providing employment, college and work preparation, and one-on-one mentoring from a business or professional person for disadvantaged high school juniors and seniors. Supported by a consortium of national and local foundations (including the Commonwealth Fund, the McArthur Foundation and the Gannett Foundation), private industry councils, colleges and businesses, Career Beginnings is a unique partnership that, seemingly overnight, has become a nearly $6 million effort, serving 5,000 young people over two years. The Career Beginnings partnership is described in an article in this issue of *Youth Programs*

### DOL Grant

The US. Department of Labor has begun to finance the Center's continuing work on the design of *programs* and *systems* for youth employment and education. Among the products of the Center's DOL grant will be publications on basic skills education for young people and enriched summer programs, and a train-the-trainer institute on youth program and system design for state employment and training professionals.

### Work/Education Partnerships

Support from the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation and DOL has allowed us to continue our work on business/education/work partnerships. As the lead article in this newsletter indicates, we have been looking at the experience of 21 partnership programs that received support from the Clark Foundation. The Center will be publishing a monograph and case studies and is developing a training program for practitioners based on the lessons gained from those partnerships.

### Practitioner Training and Assistance

Through state contracts and grants from the Taconic Foundation, the Center continues to work directly with state and local programs in California, Connecticut, New York and Massachusetts on youth employment, competency-based programs and partnerships. In Los Angeles, the Center is working on a thorough system "re-design" with the city, the PIC and 20 youth employment contractors. With the State of California, the Center has also developed a statewide training program, the *California Training Institute*. The California Institute is providing workshops on various aspects of youth program design and management to over 1,000 local planners and managers. In Massachusetts, the Center is involved in *Commonwealth Futures*, now a ten-city replication of the Boston Compact focused on dropout prevention and youth services. The Center is also helping evaluate the New York City grantmakers' summer programs, New York State's Workskills initiative, and IBM's network of 65 Job Training Centers. Finally, we continue each year to train some 70 senior goverment managers in Massachusetts in our week-long *Institute in Human Resource Management*.

### Policy Research

On the research side, the Center has just completed a review of the state of the art in programs for teen parents for the Mott Foundation. Groundbreaking work on the role of teen fathers also continues, as does our policy work on welfare and employment with support from the Ford Foundation and the Health and Human Services Department. On another front, the Center is just completing a National Science Foundation-sponsored study of the differences between the public and private sectors as deliverers of certain human services.

In sum, the Center is busier than ever. The result, we hope, will be new knowledge, publications, program ideas, and training that help practitioners serving vulnerable men and women and that represent a growing contribution to the field of human resources.

*From the Bookcase.*
*Continued from Page 13*

**Publications Noted**

***Summer Training and Employment Program (STEP): Report on the 1986 Experience***. Public/Private Ventures, 399 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

***Workforce 2000; Work and Workers for the 21st Century***. Hudson Institute, Inc., Herman Kahn Center, 5395 Emerson Way, P.O. Box 26-919, Indianapolis, IN 46226

***Children in Need***. Committee for Economic Development, 477 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10022

***Andrew Sum, Center for Labor Market Studies***, Northeastern University, 360 Huntington Avenue, Boston, MA 02115

***Declining Earnings of Young Men: Their Relation to Poverty, Teen Pregnancy, and Family Formation***. Children's Defense Fund, 122 C Street, N.W., 4th Floor, Washington, D.C. 20001

***Living on the Jagged Edge***. Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, Mott Foundation Building, Flint, MI 48502

***Launching Jobstart: A Demonstration for Dropouts in the JTPA System***. Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, 3 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10016

***School Dropouts: Survey of Local Programs***. U.S. General Accounting Office, P.O. Box 6015, Gaithersburg, MD 20877

***What to Do About Youth Dropouts; A Summary of Solutions***. Structured Employment/Economic Development Corporation (SEEDCO), 130 West 42nd Street, Suite 801, New York, NY 10036

***What Works: Schools That Work - Educating Disadvantaged Children***. Consumer Information Center, Pueblo, Colorado 81009

***"A Strategic Planning Guide for the New Futures Initiative."*** Annie E. Casey Foundation, 31 Brookside Drive, Greenwich, CT 06830

***"Basic Academic Skills: Key to Youth's Future"*** and ***"A Business Approach to Social Programming."*** Remediation Training Institute, 1521 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036

***"Youth Unemployment and the Transition from School to Work: Programs in Boston, Frankfort and London,"*** New England Economic Review (March/April 1987), pages 4-16.

***A Second Chance: Training for Jobs***. W. E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 300 South Westnedge Avenue, Kalamazoo, MI 49007

***The Fourth R: Workforce Readiness***. National Alliance of Business Clearinghouse, 1015 15th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005

***Dropout Prevention: A Book of Sources***. National Committee for Citizens in Education and National Center for Parents in Dropout Prevention, 10840 Little Patuxent Parkway, Suite 301, Columbia, MD 21044


# GRADUATE EDUCATION IN HUMAN RESOURCES

The Heller School at Brandeis University offers graduate education for persons interested in the employment, education, and training needs of disadvantaged persons. The concentration in Human Resources leads to either a Master's degree in Human Services Management or a Doctoral degree in Social Welfare. Students in the program will gain management and policy expertise in such areas as:

- Youth Employment and Education
- Self-Sufficiency Programs for Young Parents
- Dropout Prevention
- Work and Welfare Programs
- Public and Private Strategies for Income Maintenance
- Implementation of Human Resources Policies and Programs
- International Issues in Human Resources Development

For more information on the program, call The Heller School at (617) 736-3800 or write to: Director of Admissions, The Heller School, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA 02254-9110.

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